



System will increase speed on time critical planning

by Fran Crumb, Information Directorate

ROME, N.Y. — The Air Force Research Laboratory Information Directorate recently awarded a \$3,735,500 contract to ISX Corp. of Arlington, Va., for research that will improve mission planning.

The three-year agreement, “A Template-Based Planning Associate,” is funded by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency of Arlington.

“ISX will build a prototype Active Template (AcT) system to help military planners create and edit plans manually using templates,” said Dale W. Richards, program manager in the directorate’s Information Technology Division. “This will include storing and retrieving templates, defining and assigning default data, defining/capturing plan dependencies and constraints, and incorporating the means to alert a user

to inconsistencies in the plan.”

“The focus will initially be tailored toward limited missions, such as special operations,” said Richards. “There will be an emphasis on user-centric planning tools that augment the skills of human planners.”

This effort is part of DARPA’s AcT program, which has as its goal the development of revolutionary software technology to assist in the automation of time-critical planning and execution tasks for limited military operations. AcT technology is expected to increase planning speed by six times and quadruple the ratio between time spent solving hard planning problems and that spent on routine planning tasks of data gathering and briefing. It will also result in a greater than 50 percent reduction in required planning staff. @